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### **Pride of Aloha First of Three Cruise Ships to Join U.S.-Flag Fleet**

***New U.S. Flagged Cruise Ships Expected to Bring Tens of Thousands of Jobs to U.S. Citizens***

SAN FRANCISCO – The *Pride of Aloha* today was reflagged as a U.S. ship, the first major modern passenger reflagging in 50 years. The change in maritime registration means tens of thousands of jobs will be created thanks to the reflagging of the *Pride of Aloha* and the future U.S. flagging of two other Norwegian cruise ships.

“Reflagging this ship is far more than symbolic,” said U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta. “Raising the Stars and Stripes over more ships raises our maritime strength and raises jobs.”

According to an independent study by one of the nation’s leading economic consultancies, Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) America’s three U.S.-flag cruise ships planned for Hawaii are expected to create more than 20,000 U.S. jobs and generate more than \$825 million of expenditures in the U.S. economy by the end of 2007. Nearly \$360 million in federal tax revenue are also projected by 2007 from the ships and the landside economic activities stimulated by them.

The Maritime Administration helped bring the *Pride of Aloha*, formerly the *Norwegian Sky*, into the U.S.-flag fleet by overseeing the implementation of the reflagging effort enabling the ship to meet the requirements established by Congress. NCL America’s 2,000-passenger, state-of-the-art ship will start flying the Stars and Stripes on June 7 when she will begin her voyage to Hawaii to embark on seven-day inter-island cruises. The *Pride of America* and another cruise ship yet to be named also will be flagged as U.S. ships.

U.S. Maritime Administrator Captain William Schubert added, “This is great news for the U.S. Merchant Marine as it increases the number of ships sailing under the American flag. Our nation’s economic well-being hinges on an economically viable maritime industry and today marks another big step in the right direction.”

“We are very pleased to be able to revive U.S.-flagged oceangoing passenger shipping, creating domestic jobs and domestic economic benefit,” said Colin Veitch, President and CEO of NCL America, “The U.S.-flagged *Pride of Aloha* will be one of the finest ships in our fleet, and we appreciate all that the Maritime Administration and Department of Transportation have done to make this day happen.”

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